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“Digital Transformation and Sustainable Business: Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education Research and Development”

Digital Marketing, Brand Image, Price Effects on Tiktok Skintific Buying Interest Among Students

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Abstract

This study attempts to investigate how pricing, brand image, and digital marketing impact students from the class of 2022 at Mikroskil University's interest in purchasing Skintific products through the TikTok Shop. TikTok has become one of the most beneficial digital marketing platforms for brands, especially those in the Skintific business. Brand image and pricing are crucial to generating consumer trust and interest in these products. Saturation sampling is the sampling technique, and a questionnaire is used to collect data. The SmartPLS 3.2.9 application is used for data analysis. The results indicate that digital marketing has a positive and significant impact on purchasing interest. On the contrary, the study indicates that pricing and brand image have negative impacts and have no bearing on consumers' desire to buy. We can conclude that only digital marketing positively and significantly impacts buying interest in this context.

Keywords: Purchase Intention, Digital Marketing, Brand Image, Pricing, Skintific

Introduction

Rapid technological advances have transformed consumer habits and revolutionized business strategies, especially in marketing. Digitalization has made marketing more effective, especially through social media. The beauty and skincare industry in Indonesia has seen remarkable growth, with registered companies rising from 913 in 2022 to 1.010 in 2023 (Waluyo, 2023). In late 2021, the Canadian skincare business Skintific debuted in Indonesia and instantly gained recognition. Through the help of innovative products and effective digital marketing, especially on TikTok, Skintific climbed to the top of Indonesia's beauty market by 2023. With Indonesia hosting over 157 million TikTok users and a 25% annual growth rate, Indonesia has the most fantastic TikTok community in the world (Septiani, 2024). In January 2024, TikTok ads in Indonesia could reach an estimated audience of 126.83 million. This figure makes Indonesia the country with the second-widest TikTok advertising reach in the world (Annur, 2024).

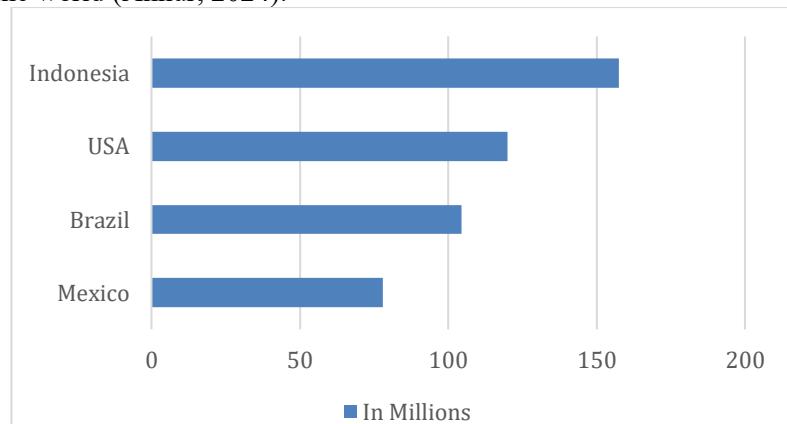


Figure 1. TikTok User in 2024 (references: data. good stats.id)



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In the figure above, it can be seen that Indonesia accounts for the most TikTok users in the world. This affects people's content consumption and shopping habits through the TikTok application. This provides Skintific with a significant advantage in online marketing through TikTok Shop.

The majority of TikTok's Indonesian users are Generation Z, who are enthusiastic about skincare. Studies reveal that 85% of Gen Z seek beauty info via TikTok (Firdaus, 2024), and 61% make purchases after exposure to related content (Septiani, 2024). Skintific has attracted young consumers through creative digital marketing, influencer collaborations, and educational content. The brand also offers affordable prices while maintaining a high-quality image.

Even though previous research has shown that brand image and digital marketing significantly influence purchasing intentions (Tarigan et al., 2023), there are still discrepancies in findings regarding how digital marketing, brand image, and price influence customers' purchasing intentions, particularly about the TikTok store and Gen Z customers. A study by Elvina and Sarah (2021) showed that price significantly affects purchase intention. On the other hand, other studies have found that digital marketing does not considerably affect purchase intention (Lifani et al., 2022). Similarly, research by Rosita (2021) shows that brand image does not have a significant impact on purchase intention. According to a study conducted by Suprianti and Putra (2024) purchase intention is negatively affected by price. This research addresses this gap by using Mikroskil University students as the study population. The study examines the partial impact of digital marketing, brand image, and price on the intention to purchase Skintific products from the TikTok store. Using this, the study provides more useful and up-to-date information about consumer behavior in the ever-changing digital marketplace.

Literature

Marketing Management

Marketing management integrates product, pricing, promotion, and distribution strategies to achieve both customer satisfaction and business goals.

Purchase Interest

Purchase interest refers to a consumer's plan or willingness to buy a particular product or service in the future. Various factors influence it, including marketing activities, product quality, and personal preferences. According to Andrian (2019), according to Andrian (2019), purchase interest is the desire to buy a product or service after evaluating the desired product or service, influenced by internal and external factors. There are four indicators contained in the buying interest (Fasha et al., 2021), namely:

1. Exploratory interest
2. Referential interest
3. Preferential interest
4. Transactional interest

Digital Marketing

The advancement of technology is currently demonstrating considerable benefits for businesses in their marketing initiatives. The main objective of utilizing digital marketing is to enhance the marketing process, facilitating direct engagement between organizations and consumers. Furthermore, companies possess the potential to attain a broad market without restrictions on numbers. Digital marketing encompasses the strategies implemented to promote brands, products, or services through digital channels or the Internet (Aziz, 2020). Its widespread appeal is ascribed to its capacity for rapid audience engagement and the provision of prompt feedback.

As noted by Lucyantoro & Rachmansyah (2022), the facets of digital marketing include the following:

1. Content Marketing: This strategy focuses on building relationships and retaining customers by providing content relevant to their interests.



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2. Search Engine Marketing: This method enables users to find product information by entering relevant keywords related to their intended purchase into search engines.
3. Social Media Strategy: This includes marketing products via various social media platforms, including blogs, Facebook, and Twitter.
4. The pull Concept posits that consumers actively search for information about the products they intend to buy.
5. Push Concept: This communication strategy involves marketers proactively contacting potential customers through email and SMS.

According to IQBAL (2021), there are six essential indicators of digital marketing:

1. Accessibility
2. Interactivity
3. Entertainment
4. Credibility
5. Irritation
6. Informativeness

Brand Image

Brand image is crucial for a brand's competitive advantage within the market. A strong brand image enables the ability to capture consumer attention effectively. This image is defined by consumer perceptions and feelings towards the brand, which are influenced by various associations and experiences linked to it. Kotler and Keller (2016), in (Liyono, 2022), brand image can be assessed through several indicators, specifically strength, uniqueness, and favorability. Keller (2003), in (Lestari & Gunawan, 2021), identifies three fundamental components that contribute to the formation of brand image:

1. The favorability of brand associations, which highlights the benefits associated with the brand.
2. The strength of brand associations serves as an indicator of the brand's robustness.
3. The uniqueness of these associations denotes the distinctiveness of the brand's associations.

These elements are vital in constructing a brand image, as they pertain directly to consumers' associations with the brand.

Price

The price refers to the monetary amount required for a product or service. It is an essential element that affects buying choices. The price is either the amount of money charged for goods and services or the value that customers pay to benefit from their possession or use (Elvina & Sarah, 2021). Knowing the basic objectives in determining prices in our business is very important in a company. Pricing objectives according to (M. Amir, 2019):

1. A profit-oriented company always chooses a price that can generate the highest profit.
2. Volume-oriented, namely, pricing oriented to a specific volume. Image-oriented, namely that the company's image can be formed through price.
3. Price stabilization aims to maintain a stable relationship between the company's and the market leader's prices.
4. Another goal is setting prices to prevent competitors from entering, maintaining customer loyalty, supporting repeat sales, or avoiding government intervention.

Review of Previous Research

Previous studies have shown that digital marketing, brand image, and price have a research gap in affecting purchase intention. A study conducted by Tarigan et al. (2023) found that digital marketing and brand image partially have a significant positive impact on purchase intention. On the other hand, a study conducted by Elvina & Sarah (2021) showed that price significantly affects purchase intention. In contrast, other studies have shown that digital marketing does not affect purchase intentions (Lifani et al., 2022). Similarly, Rosita (2021)

found that brand perception does not have a significant impact on purchase intention. Furthermore, according to a study by Suprianti & Putra (2024), purchase intention is affected by price.

Conceptual Framework

With this research conceptual framework, an explanatory approach was developed for the relationship between digital marketing, brand image, and price, to purchase Skintific products through the TikTok Shop platform. Previous theories were taken as a framework to show that these three variables influence consumer purchase intentions, especially among Generation Z, active users of social media and digital platforms.

This conceptual framework explains the relationship between variables, as well as how independent variables, namely digital marketing, brand image, and price, can influence the dependent variable of purchase intention:

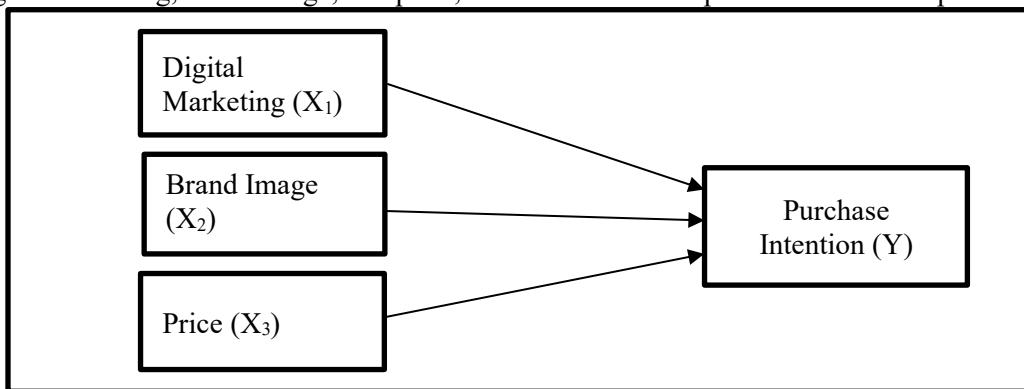


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

Explanation: - : partial influence

Hypotheses

Influence of Digital Marketing on the Purchase Intention of Skintific Products on TikTok Shop

In digital marketing strategies, digital media promotes products, services, or brands widely and interactively to consumers. Effective digital marketing can increase consumer purchase intent, as product information can be conveyed quickly, accurately, and attractively. Research by Tarigan et al. (2023) shows that digital marketing positively and significantly influences consumer purchase intent.

H1. Digital marketing positively and significantly influences the purchase intention of Skintific products on the TikTok Shop.

Influence of Brand Image on the Purchase Intention of Skintific Products on TikTok Shop

The perception that customers have of a brand, influenced by their personal experience, advertising, and product quality, is called brand image. A positive brand image makes customers more confident and more likely to purchase goods. Tarigan et al. (2023) demonstrated that brand image has a significant impact on customers' purchasing intentions.

H2. Brand image positively and significantly influences the purchase intention of Skintific products on the TikTok Shop.

Influence of Price on the Purchase Intention of Skintific Products on TikTok Shop

Price is one of the essential factors consumers consider before making a purchase. A competitive price that matches the product's quality will increase consumers' purchase intention. Research by Elvina & Sarah (2021) states that price significantly affects consumers' purchase intention.

H3. Price positively and significantly influences the purchase intention of Skintific products on TikTok Shop.

Methodology



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Research Design

This research uses a quantitative approach to test hypotheses by distributing questionnaires. The questionnaire includes questions regarding purchase intention, digital marketing, brand image, price, and respondent demographic data.

Sample and Data Collection Procedures

Students from Mikroskil University's class of 2022 are participating in the research project. All Mikroskil University students from the class of 2022 who consume Skintific and use TikTok are part of the population. A saturation sampling method was used to select all populations for sampling. SmartPLS was used to analyze the data collected through an online questionnaire.

Measurement

The study ranges from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" using a 5-point Likert scale. Structural Equation Modeling—Partial Least Squares—SEM-PLS, which includes measurements (external model) and structural studies (internal model), was used for data analysis.

Results and Discussion

Results

Data was collected through research questionnaires distributed online using Microsoft Forms to Mikroskil University students in the class of 2022. Table 1 shows that the questionnaire sent for research amounted to 63 questionnaires. The questionnaire data that returned and could be processed amounted to 46 responses. This is in by the number of samples the researcher determines in conducting the study.

Table 1. Details of Questionnaire Receipt and Return

Description	Number	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires sent	63	100%
Returned Questionnaires	63	100%
Questionnaires that can be processed	46	73%
Questionnaires that could not be processed	17	27%

Outer Model

The measurement model for SEM-PLS was analyzed utilizing SmartPLS version 3.2.9 to demonstrate the results of the validity and reliability evaluations. This study employed validity tests to determine the instrument's capabilities and produce high-quality, accurate, and pertinent data aligned with the assessed metrics.

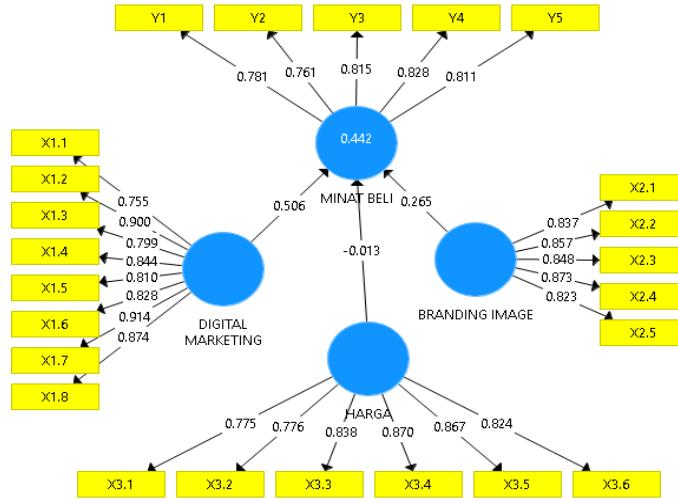


Figure 3. First outer model

Convergent Validity

The study must obtain cross-loading factors and AVE to verify validity. If the external loading value of an indicator is greater than 0.7, the indicator is considered to have convergent validity in the "good" category (Woro Ayu Satiti & Farid Wajdi, 2023). Then, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is used for evaluation, provided that the AVE value is > 0.5 .

Table 2. AVE (Average Variance Extracted)

Variabel	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Digital Marketing	0.718
Branding Image	0.709
Price	0.628
Purchase Intention	0.639

The AVE (average variance extracted) values for the three variables shown in Table 4.2 are above 0.50. The results show that the data used in this study meet the requirements for convergent validity or can be considered valid.

Discriminant Validity

Then, we performed a discriminant validity test using the smartPLS application to analyze the results of the Fornell-Larcker criterion..

Table 3. Data from Discriminant Validity Testing based on the Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Variabel	Digital Marketing	Brand Image	price	Purchase Intention
Digital Marketing	0.842			
Brand Image	0.471	0.848		
Price	0.458	0.729	0.826	
Purchase Intention	0.625	0.494	0.412	0.799



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The results of the discriminant validity test indicate that the indicators for each variable have higher values than the indicators for the secondary variables. Thus, the statements in the questionnaire are correct and can be used in research.

Reliability Test

To ensure that the tools or indicators used in the SEM-PLS model have a high level of consistency and accuracy in measuring the intended latent constructs, Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha value and composite reliability. The results are as follows.

Table 4. Reliability Test Results Data

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
<i>Digital Marketing</i>	0.941	0.951
<i>Brand Image</i>	0.903	0.927
Harga	0.907	0.682
Minat Beli	0.859	0.639

The reliability test shows a composite reliability value and a Cronbach's alpha value of over 0.70 for each variable. This confirms the reliability of the variables in the questionnaire and their use in research. Table 4.4 shows that all values for composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha are above 0.70.

Inner Model

Inner models typically predict and show the cause-and-effect relationship between latent variables. R-squared results can reveal inner models.

Table 5. R-Square

Variabel	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Minat Beli	0.442	0.402

Generally, latent variables are predicted and visualised by internal models. The results of the R-squared can be viewed. The table above shows that the model effectively describes the relationships between the variables; the adjusted R-squared column for the variable Interest in purchasing produces a value of 0.442 or 44.2%.

To determine whether the variables had a direct or indirect influence, we then used the bootstrapping method and the SmartPLS version 3.2.9 application.

Table 6. Output Path Coefficients

Variabel	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
<i>Digital Marketing -> Minat Beli</i>	0.506	3.022	0.003
<i>Brand Image -> Minat Beli</i>	0.265	1.228	0.220
<i>Harga -> Minat Beli</i>	-0.013	0.061	0.951



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“Digital Transformation and Sustainable Business: Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education Research and Development”

The bootstrapping results show that only digital marketing positively and significantly influences consumer purchasing Intention.

Discussion

a) The Effect of Digital Marketing on Purchase Intention

The results of our study show a statistical t-value of 3.022, which is lower than the t-table value of 1.96. In addition, the p-value is 0.003, less than 0.05. The study found that purchase interest is significantly affected by digital marketing. This is consistent with the results of the study by Tarigan et al. (2023) in which the authors argue that digital marketing can influence customers' purchase interest. Thus, H1 can be accepted.

b) The Effect of Brand Image on Purchase Intention

Our study showed a t-statistic value of 1.228, which exceeds the t-table value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.220 below 0.05. The research results show that brand image does not significantly influence consumers' purchasing interest. This correlates with the findings of Rosita (2021) who found that brand image does not influence consumers' purchasing intention. For this reason, H2 is not acceptable.

c) The Effect of Price on Purchase Intention

Our study showed a t-statistic value of 0.061, which exceeds the t-table value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.951 below 0.05. The research results show that price does not significantly influence consumers' purchasing interest. This correlates with the findings of Suprianti & Putra, (2024), who found that price does not influence consumers' purchasing intention. For this reason, H3 is not acceptable

Conclusion

This study shows that digital marketing has a significant and beneficial impact on Mikroskil University students' intention to purchase Skintific products from the TikTok shop. On the other hand, brand image and price have an insignificant impact on the purchase intention of Skintific products on TikTok Shop among Mikroskil University students. The effective use of digital marketing strategies such as engaging content, influencer collaborations, and live shopping features on TikTok has attracted the attention of Generation Z consumers, who are the primary users of this platform. A strong brand image, built through consistent scientific positioning and high-quality product offerings, further enhances consumer trust and preference for Skintific. In addition, the competitive and affordable pricing of Skintific products makes them more accessible and appealing to young consumers, increasing their likelihood of purchasing.

This study, while providing valuable insights into the influence of digital marketing, brand image, and price on the purchase intention of Skintific products on TikTok Shop among Mikroskil University students, is subject to several limitations that may affect the validity and generalizability of its findings.

First, the research sample is limited to students from a single university and cohort, which may not fully represent the broader population of TikTok users or skincare consumers in Indonesia. This narrow demographic focus restricts the applicability of the results to other age groups, educational backgrounds, or geographic regions. Second, the data collection method relies solely on self-reported questionnaires, which are susceptible to response bias and may not accurately reflect actual purchase behavior. Additionally, the study's cross-sectional nature prevents the assessment of changes in purchase intention over time or the identification of causal relationships between variables.

Another limitation is excluding other potentially influential factors, such as product quality, customer service, or peer influence, which could also affect purchase intention but were not examined in this research. The study's



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“Digital Transformation and Sustainable Business: Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education Research and Development”

focus on only three independent variables may oversimplify the complex decision-making process of consumers in the digital marketplace.

Future studies should consider expanding the sample to include participants from diverse backgrounds, regions, and age groups to enhance the generalizability of the results. Employing longitudinal or experimental designs could also help establish causal relationships and track changes in consumer behavior over time. Moreover, subsequent studies should include extra variables like product innovation, customer support, or social impact to offer a more thorough insight into the elements influencing purchase intentions in the digital age. By addressing these limitations, future studies can offer deeper insights and more robust recommendations for academics and practitioners.

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International Conference on Finance, Economics, Management, Accounting, and Informatics

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